

CLAIMS:

1. A vehicle immobilisation device for securing to a vehicle windscreen, comprising:

5 screening means which, when the device is in an in-use disposition on the vehicle windscreen, serves to impair a driver's view through the windscreen, wherein the screening means is changeable from a first configuration to a second configuration, the first
10 configuration being more compact than the second configuration;

suction grip means for holding said screening means in said in-use disposition on said windscreen by suction;

15 releasing means for enabling release of the suction of said suction grip means so as to allow removal of the device from the windscreen; and

security means for preventing unauthorised operation of said releasing means.

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2. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising suction means for producing the suction in said suction grip means.

25 3. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said suction means are operable manually by the user of the device to produce the suction in said suction grip means.

30 4. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a pump handle that is operated by said user to produce the suction.

35 5. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 4, wherein said pump handle is formed and arranged so as to serve also as a grip handle for

lifting and carrying the vehicle immobilisation device.

6. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising housing means for housing
5 said releasing means, and covering means moveable between an open position allowing access to said releasing means and a closed position preventing access to said releasing means, said security means serving to lock said covering means in said closed position.

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7. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 6, wherein said covering means comprise a hinged lid. .

15 8. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 6 or 7, wherein said covering means also act as said screening means.

9. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any
20 preceding claim, wherein said suction grip means comprise a plurality of suction grips.

10. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 9, when read as appended to claim 6, wherein
25 covering means and security means are provided separately for each of said plurality of suction grips.

11. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, further comprising a protective layer
30 arranged to cushion the vehicle windscreen from contact with the device during fitting and when in said in-use disposition on said vehicle windscreen.

12. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in
35 claim 11, wherein said protective layer is formed of high density foam.

13. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising suction grip protection means for preventing access to said suction grip means
5 from the under-side of the device facing the windscreen when in said in-use disposition.

14. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 13, when read as appended to claim 11, wherein
10 said protective layer is arranged around said suction grip means so as to serve as said suction grip protection means.

15. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said device is arranged to sit
15 flush to said vehicle windscreen when in said in-use disposition.

16. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein parts of the device visible
20 from the exterior of the vehicle when the device is in said in-use disposition are decorated in a highly visible finish.

17. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 16, wherein said highly visible finish is a reflective finish.
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18. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said screening means comprise
30 a plurality of screen portions.

19. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 18, wherein said screen portions are arranged and
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connected so as to be foldable or operable to be rolled up.

20. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said screening means comprises two screen portions which are hingeably connected together.

21. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein said screening means comprises rubber.

22. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 21, wherein the screening means further comprises a plurality of rigid formings.

23. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed claim 21 or 22, wherein said screening means is sonically welded to the suction grip means.

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24. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, where said suction grip means comprise one or more suction cups.

25. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the device assumes a substantially flat profile when in said in-use disposition.

26. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the width of the device is of the order of $2d \tan \theta$, where d is an estimate of the distance from the driver's eye to the vehicle windscreen, and θ is greater than 5° .

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27. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in claim 26, wherein θ is greater than 10° .

28. A vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in
5 claim 26, wherein θ is greater than 15° .

29. A method for securing a vehicle immobilisation device as claimed in any preceding claim to a vehicle windscreen, comprising the steps of:

10 changing said screening means from said first configuration to said second configuration;

arranging said screening means on the vehicle windscreen in said in-use disposition so as to impair a driver's view through the windscreen;

15 activating said suction grip means so as to hold said screening means in said in-use disposition on said windscreen; and

activating said security means so as to prevent unauthorised operation of said releasing means.

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30. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein said screening means are arranged on said vehicle windscreen such that the centre of the screening means is substantially in the driver's line of vision.

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31. A method as claimed in claim 29 or 30, wherein the vehicle immobilisation device is placed on the exterior of the vehicle windscreen.

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32. A method as claimed in claims 29, 30 or 31, further comprising the step of applying an information sticker to the windscreen.

33. A method for removing a vehicle immobilisation
35 device secured to a vehicle windscreen by a method as

claimed in any one of claims 29 to 32, comprising the steps of:

de-activating said security means so as to enable operation of said releasing means;

5 operating said releasing means to deactivate said suction grip means;

removing the vehicle immobilisation device from the vehicle windscreen; and

10 changing said screening means from said second configuration to said first configuration.

34. A method of preventing a vehicle from being driven away, comprising attaching a device as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 28 to a vehicle windscreen.

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35. A screening means of a vehicle immobilisation device, the screening means being changeable from a first configuration to a second configuration, the first configuration being more compact than the second configuration and having means for allowing engagement with a suction grip means of the device.

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36. A vehicle immobilisation device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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37. A method for securing a vehicle immobilisation device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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38. A method for removing a vehicle immobilisation device substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

39. A method of preventing a vehicle from being driven away substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

5 40. A screening means substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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